

SEASHORE TRANSPORTATION FORUM

Meeting Minutes

January 16, 2008

Members

Councilmember Patrick Ewing, City of Bothell (Co-Chair)

Councilmember Ed Sterner, City of Lake Forest Park (Co-Chair)

Councilmember Peggy Pritchard Olson, City of Edmonds

Councilmember Don Fiene, Lake Forest Park

Megan Heahlke, Councilmember Ferguson's Office

Mayor David Baker, City of Kenmore

Councilmember Kyoko Wright, City of Mountlake Terrace

Mayor Cindy Ryu, City of Shoreline

Chris Picard, WSDOT

I. Public Comment

No public comment was provided.

II. Summary of December 19, 2007 Meeting

The summary of the December 19, 2007 meeting was approved.

III. 2008 Members

Following introductions, Co-Chair Ewing welcomed new member Kyoko Wright and Megan Heahlke from Councilmember Ferguson's office. He also reported that Bothell had not yet made its appointments, but he indicated that Councilmember Freed would not serve as a member of the Forum during 2008. Co-Chair Sterner reported that he and Councilmember Fiene would be reappointed next week. Mayor Ryu reported that she and Deputy Mayor Terry Scott had been appointed for Shoreline. Councilmember Wright reported that she and Michelle Robles had been appointed for Mountlake Terrace. Councilmember Pritchard Olson reported that she and Councilmember Deanna Dawson had been appointed for Edmonds. Mayor Baker reported that he and Deputy Mayor Milton Curtis would serve as Kenmore's representatives. Co-Chair Ewing reported that the City Council of Seattle has decided not to appoint a representative to the Forum pending resolution of the regional governance discussions. Mian Rice, however, has indicated that he will represent the Seattle Mayor's office on occasion at the Forum. Co-Chair Ewing expressed interest in representation both by Seattle and King County Council would be very helpful, noting that the Forum functioned extremely well when the Co-Chairs were Councilmember Edmonds and Councilmember Conlin. Ms. Heahlke indicated that Councilmember Ferguson would attend meetings as his schedule permits, but she will regularly attend. Co-Chair Ewing suggested that the Forum could modify its meeting schedule to allow Councilmember Ferguson to attend more frequently.

Co-Chair Sterner asked all members to provide their appointments or reappointments as soon as possible. He referred members to the list of nominations for Co-Chairs for 2008 that was provided with the meeting materials. He noted that the nominations of Councilmember Clark and Councilmember Amundson should be removed from the list, since they are no longer elected representatives to the Forum. He asked if there were any further nominations. None were made, and nominations were closed. The election is scheduled for the February meeting.

IV. Sound Transit Phase 2 Update

Patrice Hardy was unable to attend the meeting, so Sally Marks provided a brief update on Sound Transit Phase 2 activities based on reports by Sound Transit staff at recent ETP and SCATBd meetings. Items of interest included the following:

- The Sound Transit Board is considering when the best time would be to put another measure on the ballot. Currently November 2008 and November 2010 appear to be the most likely. Staff is providing information for the Board to be able to make a determination about a 2008 vote by late February or early March of this year.
- A workshop to review information has been scheduled for January 31, in addition to the regular Sound Transit Board meetings.
- The Sound Transit Board appears unlikely to proceed with the same plan that was on the ballot in November of 2007. Indications are that the measure would be more incremental and involve a lower tax rate.
- Sound Transit Board members are interested in input about the most appropriate tax rates and elements that should be included in the ST2 plan.

Co-Chair Sterner asked Forum members for their suggestions on these topics, indicating that if the Forum can develop some consensus by the end of February it may want to provide formal input to the Sound Transit Board.

- Mayor Ryu indicated that the Shoreline Council has not discussed this issue, but her personal impression was that the Prop 1 measure was too big and voters were concerned about the cumulative tax burden. She suggested that projects that can be delivered sooner than light rail might receive support, and indicated that there is a need for east-west transit service as well as a north-south spine.
- Councilmember Pritchard Olson also reported that her Council has not yet reviewed this, but suggested that until light rail is operating, the public sees only the cost, and not the benefit. Waiting until 2010 for another public vote might be helpful in achieving more support.
- Kevin Garrett from Lynnwood reported that the Lynnwood City Council has not met since Prop 1 failed, but indicated that the city has strongly supported rail as the regional transit backbone.

- Co-Chair Sterner suggested that a proposal that extended light rail to Northgate and provided complementary bus service might be supported by the public, especially if the bus facilities could be later converted to light rail. Councilmember Pritchard Olson responded that it may be difficult to win Snohomish County's support for that proposal.
- Mayor Baker indicated that Kenmore shares Shoreline's concerns about the need for more east-west transit service, and more off-peak frequency of service on north-south routes. He also expressed concern about the potential impact on SR 522 and related facilities from tolling on 520.
- Co-Chair Sterner indicated that improved transit service could be one way of mitigating impacts from tolling, and Mayor Baker agreed. Councilmember Pritchard Olson also suggested that exclusive bus lanes would be helpful, since buses currently are affected by congestion in the HOV lanes.
- Chris Picard agreed that the HOV lanes often do not operate at the standard 45 miles per hour during the peak. But he also noted that there would be significant implications to changing the HOV requirement to 3+ from 2+, and that policy decision would need to be carefully considered.
- Councilmember Fiene suggested that the current proposal for rail on the BNSF route might relieve pressure on other facilities, especially those in outlying communities.
- Co-Chair Ewing reported that Bothell does not support rail across the lake as the appropriate regional transit solution. Instead, the Bothell position is that Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in the I-405 corridor and across the lake would be more cost effective. He also noted that it will be interesting to see what the legislature decides about funding SR 520.
- Councilmember Wright indicated that the region will not support a major transportation investment package until the regional benefits can be clearly articulated. However, she felt it is important to get started with something.

Additional discussion about this topic will be scheduled for the February meeting.

V. Legislative Issues

Sally Marks provided copies of the legislative position statements that had been approved by the South County Area Transportation Board (SCATBd), Eastside Transportation Partnership (ETP) and Transportation Policy Board. She also reported that a subcommittee of ETP had drafted language on principles about regional transportation governance, but these have not yet been approved by the full body. In response to questions, she indicated that these principles will be shared with the Forum after they are approved. Co-Chairs Ewing and Sterner asked Forum members if they would like to take positions on any of the issues included in the other position statements, noting that much of the language among the three statements is similar. Mayor Baker suggested that it would be important to protect funding for priority projects that has already been

approved. Mr. Picard clarified that, given the constraints of the state transportation budget, it may be helpful to emphasize the need to protect Nickel and Transportation Partnership Account funds so that those projects can be completed. He added that the legislature's action to uphold I-695 removed a big revenue source for the ferries and contributes to the overall shortage of funds for transportation improvements, including replacing ferry boats. (He noted, however, that ferries fund about 75% of their operating costs from fares.)

Co-Chair Ewing reported that the Bothell City Council had approved a legislative agenda supporting 1) funding for the project to provide access to the UW Bothell campus from SR 522; 2) mitigation funding for SR 522 to offset impacts from tolling SR 520; and 3) postponing tolling until after SR 522 realignment in Bothell is completed.

Co-Chair Sterner reported that Lake Forest Park's legislative agenda focused on local issues, not regional issues. However, he expressed interest in the Forum's providing input, assuming that the legislature is likely to take action on transportation issues during the short session. In response to this question, David Hopkins indicated that action on a tolling policy bill is likely, but he did not expect the legislature to act on changes to regional transportation governance.

Councilmember Pritchard Olson suggested that the Forum consider adopting the language on tolling approved by SCATBd, adding that it would be best to avoid many specifics. Mayor Baker indicated that he supported the PSRC language. Co-Chair Ewing indicated that he had hoped the PSRC language regarding mitigation would be stronger, but he expressed support for the SCATBd language. Mayor Ryu indicated that she supported including the first sentence of the PSRC language on tolling. Mayor Baker suggested that the Forum consider providing input on protecting existing state revenues in addition to input on tolling policy. In general, the PSRC language on tolling was supported, clarifying that tolling revenues should be allowed to be used for transit as a mitigation measure, both in the tolled corridor, and in other corridors that would be affected by traffic diverted from the tolled facility.

ACTION: The Forum unanimously approved the drafting of language for input to the legislature on protection of existing revenues and tolling policy. The draft language is to be circulated to Forum members for final approval electronically so that the input can be provided in a timely way to the legislature.

VI. 2008 Draft Work Program

Co-Chair Sterner referred members to the draft work program that had been provided with the meeting materials. Co-Chair Ewing indicated that he would like the work program to also include actions to try to persuade Seattle to participate in the Forum. Co-

Chair Sterner suggested that Seattle may be interested in participating if the Forum can continue to focus on substantive issues. Councilmember Pritchard Olson added that the Forum is also useful in providing education, indicating that a report from the group working on the re-use of the BNSF right of way might be helpful to the Forum members.

Co-Chair Sterner asked that members review the work program and provide suggestions to staff so they can be incorporated into the materials provided for action at the February meeting.

Mayor Baker reported that the city is planning a presentation by Professor Mark Hallenbeck on Transit Oriented Development, and he invited other Forum members. Several expressed interest in attending.

Other attendees:

Kevin Garrett, Lynnwood	Scott MacColl, Shoreline
Sally Marks, King County DOT	David Hopkins, WSDOT
Brian Donnebrink, Community Transit	Neil Jensen, Lake Forest Park
Seyed Safavian, Bothell	